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[US Department of the Interior News Briefing](#)



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DOI In The News

Interior Secretary Details Trump's Priorities In Alaska Native Country.

[KTUU-TV](#) Anchorage, AK (10/19, Baird) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke addressed the Alaska Federation of Natives on Thursday. Zinke said the priorities of the Trump Administration are to "clean up contaminated lands in rural Alaska, get strong Native voices into positions of power, and make sure the thousands of Vietnam-era Alaska Native veterans finally receive land they were promised," according to the article. Saying that "there is already progress on one of those fronts," Zinke noted that he recently "appointed Inupiat Tara Sweeney to serve as assistant secretary of the Interior Department, leading the Indian Affairs office." Zinke said, "I'm proud that we're nominating the first Alaska Native to any Senate confirmed position."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Alaska Dispatch News](#) (10/19, Demer) and the [Alaska Public Radio Network](#) (10/19, Hughes).

Local TV coverage was provided by [KTUU-TV](#) Anchorage, AK (10/19).

Democrats Fail To Block Arctic Reserve Oil Drilling.

[Reuters](#) (10/19, Gardner) reports Senate Democrats failed to pass a measure blocking oil and gas drilling in parts of the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve, losing 48-52 on a mostly party-line vote. The amendment, sponsored by Sen. Maria Cantwell, would have eliminated a budget measure directing the Senate energy committee to find \$1 billion in revenue over 10 years.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (10/19, Siegel) reports that Sen. John McCain, "who in 2005 voted against allowing drilling in the refuge, provided a decisive vote this time, refusing to vote with Democrats who tried to block it." Sen. Susan Collins, "who also voted against drilling in the refuge before, did the same Thursday night, siding with Democrats." Sen. Joe Manchin voted with Republicans.

[The Hill](#) (10/19, Henry) reports Cantwell said during the floor debate, "The notion that we, tonight, after 60-plus years, would give up what is a biologically important area, a critical habitat for polar bears, a breeding ground for caribou, migratory birds and over 200 species — for what? For oil we don't need?" Sen. Lisa Murkowski countered, saying, "Those who would support this amendment will deny us the opportunity to do something constructive in this country, when it comes to our opportunities to produce energy, to produce wealth." Sens. Joe Manchin and Susan Collins both crossed party lines on the measure.

The [Huffington Post](#) (10/19, Visser) reports Sen. Ed Markey said in a statement, "Republicans are trying to use the budget process to ram through drilling in the crown jewel of America's wildlife refuge system because they know they don't have the votes to do so through regular order. ... Republicans are moving forward with a budget that includes this poison pill to hand over the wildest place left in America to Big Oil. This is nothing more than fossil fuel folly."

Trip Van Noppen, president of Earthjustice, said, "This is a blatant attempt to use the budget reconciliation process to pass a divisive and controversial proposal that would lead us in the wrong direction on climate."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Eilperin) reports that the vote "represented a victory for the GOP and a defeat for environmentalists." It adds that "environmentalists said they would continue to fight any move to drill in the refuge, which has been subject to fights in Congress for years."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Alaska Dispatch News](#) (10/19, Martinson) and [Natural Gas Intelligence](#) (10/19, Passut).

Senators Introduce Bipartisan Bill To Combat Wildfires.

[The Hill](#) (10/19, Henry) reports that "a bipartisan group of senators introduced a bill Thursday to address severe wildfires in the West." The bill "establishes a strategy for combating future wildfires like those that have burned millions of acres of forest so far this year." It "provides \$100 million to help at-risk communities prepare for wildfires and requires firefighting agencies to use unspent suppression funds for preparedness activities ahead of future wildfire seasons." The legislation "also establishes a pilot program for the U.S. Forest Service and the Interior Department in which the agencies would 'treat' the top 1 percent most at-risk and least-controversial forest lands for future fires."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (10/19, Siegel) reports that "five Western senators introduced a bill that is intended to be a compromise between competing factions in Congress who are weighing how to help fund wildfire response while imposing forest management changes that can prevent fires from starting." The legislation was "quickly endorsed by the timber industry, firefighting, and conservation groups, including the American Forest Resource Council, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the National Wildlife Federation." However, "the big test will come in the House, where Republicans have called for a more comprehensive forest management response."

Also reporting are the [Daily Caller](#) (10/19, White), the [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (10/19, Grandoni) and the [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Grandoni).

Four National Monuments Cover 10,000 Square Miles, And This Group Wants Them Gone.

The [Daily Caller](#) (10/19, Pearce) reports that "a group of 37 free-market organizations, trade associations, businesses, former federal officials and current lawmakers signed a letter sent Wednesday requesting that President Donald Trump completely rescind four national monuments that cover more than 10,000 square miles." The National Center for Public Policy Research "sent the letter to the White House in response to a Department of the Interior review of 22 national monuments over the summer, after which Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke suggested changes to six designations and rollbacks to four others, according to an early draft of his report obtained by The Washington Post." The letter calls for a full rescission of Bears Ears National Monument, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument.

Blackfeet Hesitant About Proposed National Monument At Badger-Two Medicine.

[Montana Public Radio](#) (10/19, Hegyi) reports the Blackfeet Nation is "hesitant to fully embrace" a recommendation by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to create a new national monument at Badger-Two Medicine "before having a say in how the proposed monument is managed." Blackfeet Tribal Chairman Harry Barnes "says making Badger-Two Medicine a national monument allows the land to fall under further federal control." Ideally, members "want the land returned to the tribe but Barnes says that's unlikely. So the council opposes the designation unless the Interior Department allows them to co-manage the monument."

King Cove And Feds Exploring Options To Build Road Without Congressional Approval.

The [Alaska Public Radio Network](#) (10/19, Sobel) reports that "the city of King Cove is working closely with the Trump administration to find a way to build a road to Cold Bay through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge." However, "city leaders are taking issue with a recent Washington Post article that describes the administration attempting to conceal a behind-the-scenes deal to build the road." According to the article, they are hoping for a deal that "could avoid Congress entirely."

Additional coverage was provided by [KTOO-FM](#) Juneau, AK (10/19, Sobel).

Lara Trump Swings White House Behind Pets For Vets Campaign.

The [Washington Examiner](#) (10/19, Bedard) reports that “a building ‘pets for vets’ campaign to link troubled war veterans with abandoned pets in shelters won a huge White House backing Wednesday when Lara Trump, the president’s daughter-in-law, hosted an unprecedented West Wing meeting to get key Cabinet officials on board.” According to the article, “in an hour-long Roosevelt Room session hosted by Trump, top presidential aides, two cabinet secretaries, House lawmakers pushing legislation on the issue and the president of the Humane Society of the United States pledged to take the therapy dog campaign nationwide.” The article says that “Trump, long a passionate campaigner for animals, was joined by presidential advisor Kellyanne Conway, and brought in Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, Rep. Ron DeSantis, author of the PAWS Act, and others together to show support for efforts to help warriors suffering from PTSD and other ailments by teaming them with shelter animals.” The article notes that “Zinke attended because he has a policy allowing dogs at the office, and is also a retired Navy SEAL leader.”

House Panel: 15 Trump Agencies Yet To Provide Travel Costs.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Yen) reports the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is “demanding” that 15 federal agencies – including the White House – provide adequate information regarding senior officials’ air travel after reports of expensive trips by Cabinet secretaries. In letters sent this week, the committee threatened to subpoena the Departments of Agriculture and Justice if officials failed to provide requested information, and warned that 13 other agencies have only partly responded to information requests. For all 15 agencies, the panel “also requested additional travel information for the time period of Jan. 1 to Jan. 19.”

Spotted.

[Politico Influence](#) (10/19, Meyer) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke was seen at a National Geographic forum on ocean conservation Wednesday afternoon at the Library of Congress.

Public Getting Raw Deal On Royalties.

In an op-ed for the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#) (10/20, Alexander), Ryan Alexander, President Of Taxpayers For Common Sense, writes that “for decades, industry has been picking up land for pennies on the dollar, thanks to outdated Bureau of Land Management rental and royalty rates that allow oil and gas companies to rent federal lands at \$1.50 per acre and pay outdated royalties that are far lower than many western states, including New Mexico, charge.” Alexander hopes that the Royalty Policy Committee will “recognize how the current system is in dire need of reform and takes steps to ensure that New Mexicans are receiving the money they deserve when industry drills, mines and produces on our public lands.”

Bureau Of Indian Affairs

Federal Officials Target Harassment In Arizona Tribes.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Silber) reports that “a scathing new report released this week by the U.S. Department of Interior casts a critical light on the Bureau of Indian Affairs response to sexual harassment complaints by Colorado River Indian Tribes workers and members involving a bureau employee.” The report by the department’s Office of Inspector General “states BIA officials took insufficient action after an employee sent Tribes workers and members sexually explicit text and Facebook messages.” Officials “released the summary of the report, which highlights the BIA officials’ lack of response among supervisors, managers and human resources regarding the employee’s actions.”

Additional coverage was provided by [KNXV-TV](#) Phoenix (10/19).

Native American Leaders Seek Federal Climate Change Action.

The [AP](#) (10/19) reports that “Native American leaders are asking the Trump administration to do more to combat climate change.” According to the article, “tribal leaders attending this week’s National Congress of American Indians in Milwaukee told Wisconsin Public Radio that recent wildfires and hurricanes are a sign of rising global temperatures.” They want the federal government “to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” John Tahsuda, an Interior Department official, said “federal agencies are working to understand the science behind climate change,” according to the article. Tahsuda said, “What is the science of it, what’s going on,

because if we don't understand the science, then we don't know how to address it adequately."

Sisseton Man Sentenced To Prison In Grazing Fraud Scheme.

The [AP](#) (10/19) reports that "a Sisseton man has been sentenced to nearly four years in prison for his role in a cattle grazing fraud scheme." According to authorities, "Keith Hagen and his former wife, Amanda Holy Bull, provided custom grazing services to ranchers on land they leased from the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs." U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler "says the two entered into fraudulent contracts and pocketed the money, defrauding ranchers out of \$236,000."

Bureau Of Land Management

Report Expresses Concern About Methane Emissions In Oklahoma.

The [Oklahoman](#) (10/19, Wilmoth) reports that Earthworks and the Coalition for Oklahoma's Renewable Energy called emissions from methane a threat to the public's health in a new report. The report "said efforts by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and Environmental Protection Administration to roll back methane emissions could harm Americans." Oklahoma Independent Petroleum Association VP of Regulatory Affairs A.J. Ferate said that the "oil and gas companies do not want methane emissions flowing away." "Oil and gas companies do a very good job and work hard to control the methane emissions that come off the wells. The reason is very simple. If they don't, they are letting money float away."

Kudos For Wild Horse Operation.

The [Grand Junction \(CO\) Daily Sentinel](#) (10/19, Harmon) reports that "speakers lauded the Little Bookcliffs Wild Horse Area during comments to the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Committee, which heard public comments Tuesday in Grand Junction." Callie Hendrickson, speaking on behalf of the Wild Horse and Burro Rangeland Coalition, told the committee that "the handling of the Little Bookcliffs band of horses is 'one of the best examples of management' of wild horses in the nation." Also, "the Cloud Foundation, which opposes euthanasia, praised the Little Bookcliffs approach to managing the horses."

Bureau Of Reclamation

NMSU, Bureau Of Reclamation Host Desalination Workshop.

The [Las Cruces \(NM\) Sun-News](#) (10/19) reports that New Mexico State University and the Bureau of Reclamation will hold a workshop on Tuesday, Oct. 24 to discuss "the future role of desalination." According to the article, "members of the New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute will discuss current desalination research in the Mesilla Basin."

Bureau Of Safety And Environmental Enforcement

More Oil Spilled Into Gulf Of Mexico By LLOG Than Originally Estimated.

The [AP](#) (10/19) reports that the US Coast Guard, in a news release Thursday, "said...that offshore oil and gas operator LLOG Exploration Offshore reports about 16,000 barrels of oil were discharged" after originally estimating that between 7,950 to 9,350 barrels spilled into the Gulf of Mexico. According to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, oil spilled out from a fractured underwater pipe last Saturday. Clean Gulf Associates and Marine Spill Response Corporation have skimming vessels on standby.

Additional coverage was provided by [KATC-TV](#) Lafayette, LA (10/19).

Fish And Wildlife Service

Jefferson County Receives \$15.8 Million For Dune Restoration.

The [Beaumont \(TX\) Enterprise](#) (10/19, Teitz) reports that "an almost \$16 million grant will go to restore the dunes and coastal habitat at McFaddin Wildlife Refuge, Jefferson County announced Thursday." The grant, "which will fund about one-third of the \$45 million project to rebuild lost beaches and dunes along 20 miles of the Gulf Coast, is part of the settlement funds from the

2010 BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill."

Also reporting are the [Port Arthur \(TX\) News](#) (10/19) and [KFDM-TV Beaumont \(TX\)](#) Beaumont, TX (10/19, Scott, Cunningham).

Sandhill Crane Hunting Resolution Introduced By Gratiot County House Rep.

The [Mt. Pleasant \(MI\) Morning Sun](#) (10/19, Bradley) reports that "a Sandhill crane hunting season has been proposed by House Rep. Jim Lower in an effort to control its population and reduce crop damage." House Resolution 154 would "encourage the Michigan Natural Resources Commission to add Sandhill cranes to the game species list and seek approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for a hunting season in Michigan," according to a news release from Lower. The House of Representatives adopted the resolution on Wednesday.

Additional coverage was provided by the [Traverse City \(MI\) Record-Eagle](#) (10/19, Nie).

Endangered Red Squirrels Might Be Unable To Recover From Arizona Wildfire.

The [Arizona Daily Star](#) (10/19, Davis) reports that "a top U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service official said Wednesday that he's 'not optimistic' about the endangered Mount Graham red squirrel's ability to survive in the wild after a new survey estimated its numbers have fallen to 35." According to the article "the annual survey estimated the squirrel population has dropped from a 2016 estimate of 252 squirrels because of the impacts of this summer's Frye Fire." Steve Spangle, Arizona field supervisor for the wildlife service, said, "We're very worried about a critter going extinct under our watch. It doesn't mean we won't do what we can."

In Puerto Rico, A Hopeful Sight: Endangered Parrot Spotted After Hurricane Maria.

[NBC News](#) (10/19, Gamboa) reports that "since Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico about one month ago, a team of scientists has trekked daily into El Yunque National Forest hoping to pick up signs or sounds of endangered Puerto Rican Parrots." On Wednesday, 28 days after Maria, "someone spotted a cotorra, the Spanish word for parrot, with a radio collar and an orange leg band in Barrio Caguitas in Aguas Buenas." The article notes that "before the hurricane, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had counted 56 to 60 parrots, the highest number of the parrots since 1967, thanks to a program to restore the species."

National Park Service

National Park Service Kills Proposed New Rules For Dog Access In GGNRA.

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (10/20, Johnson) reports that the National Park Service "pulled the plug Thursday on a 14-year-long process for restricting dog access in the 80,000-acre Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 10 months after revelations emerged that agency officials had improperly corresponded about the process from their personal email accounts." The NPS "abandoned its effort to draw up new rules for where dogs can be walked off-leash and said it would stick with regulations that have been in effect since 1979." Acting park service Director Michael Reynolds said in a statement, "We can do better and in the interest of upholding the highest standard of transparency and trust with our Bay Area neighbors. We have determined that it is no longer appropriate to continue with the current dog management rule-making process."

Additional coverage was provided by the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (10/19) and the [Marin \(CA\) Independent Journal](#) (10/19, Prado).

A City Campsite, Amenities Included.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Stapinski) reports on the rise of "glamping" or "glamour camping." The article highlights Camp Rockaway, "the second of two glamping pilots this year." Daphne Yun, a spokeswoman for the National Park Service, said, "At this point we don't know what the future holds. But everything's on the table."

Maryland Continues Commitment To 'Every Kid In A Park'.

The [Southern Maryland News Net](#) (10/19) reports that "the Maryland Department of Natural Resources once again is partnering with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Every Kid in a Park program, which provides fourth-grade children and their families free admission to Maryland state parks along with national parks and other federal lands across the country." The Maryland Park Service will "accept this year's Every Kid in a Park pass now through August 31, 2018 at all 72

state parks."

YNP To Replace Sewer Line Related To Arsenic Lawsuit.

The [Bozeman \(MT\) Daily Chronicle](#) (10/20, Wright) reports that Yellowstone National Park will "replace a stretch of sewer line sometime over the next two years in an attempt to solve arsenic problems that led to a lawsuit against the park last year." A U.S. Department of Interior lawyer "sent a letter to an attorney for the Gardiner-Park County Water and Sewer District that says Yellowstone plans to remove 2,700 feet of clay sewer line near Mammoth Hot Springs and replace it with PVC pipe." The Interior attorney, Colleen Burnidge, "wrote that the pipe project may take two years to complete, but they think it will help solve the problem."

Gateway Arch Shows Off Progress On Visitor Center And Museum.

The [Riverfront \(MO\) Times](#) (10/19, Hayes) reports that the Gateway Arch Park Foundation and the National Park Service on Thursday "provided a media tour of the renovations for the Arch's visitor center and museum." According to the article, "even though renovations are still underway, workers have added a 46,000 square-foot multi-level addition and significantly reshaped the monument's connection to downtown St. Louis." The article says that "Rhonda Schier, chief of museum services with the National Parks Service and Ryan McClure, director of communications and activation at Gateway Arch Foundation, led the tour."

NPS Approves Plans For New Yellowstone Youth Campus.

[Yellowstone Insider](#) (10/19, Reichard) reports that Yellowstone National Park has "approved a new plan for the Yellowstone Youth Campus, following a period of public comment earlier this year." The park will "opt to build a new campus in Mammoth Hot Springs to replace the current one." Superintendent Dan Wenk commented, "The youth campus will be funded through a combination of philanthropic donations received by our non-profit partner, Yellowstone Forever, and federal support. The campus we build together will teach sustainability. It will facilitate high quality learning experiences and inspire students to be life-long learners and stewards of Yellowstone long into the National Park Service's second century."

Additional coverage was provided by the [Livingston \(MT\) Enterprise](#) (10/19).

Seashore Releases Visions For Ranchlands.

The [Point Reyes \(CA\) Light](#) (10/19, Guth) reports that "six alternative strategies that could guide the Point Reyes National Seashore's management of lands currently leased for ranching and dairying were released on Monday, marking the first step toward amending the seashore's General Management Plan." The release commenced "a 30-day public comment period that will end on Nov. 15." According to the article, "two public meetings have been scheduled to share information and gather input on the alternatives, including one alternative that has been chosen as the seashore's 'initial proposal.'"

Assateague Nonprofit Aims To Save Island Horses From Human Food.

The [Delmarva \(MD\) Daily Times](#) (10/19, Shelton) reports that "in July, Assateague Island National Park lost one member of its most well-known pony herd: a 7-year-old mare, which was found dead in a campground." Investigation by NPS "officials revealed the mare – known officially as N2BHS-AI, but more affectionately as 'Chama Wingapo' – had ingested large amounts of dog food, which caused an intestinal blockage, and then a rupture which led to its early death." According to the article, "in an effort to prevent any further deaths of the island's iconic horses, the nonprofit Assateague Island Alliance is working to address food related to wildlife and human interactions through a program called 'A Fed Horse is a Dead Horse: A Project to Protect Assateague's Wild Horses.'"

Longtime Park Ranger Tells Tales Of History, Natural Beauty.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Soergel) reports on Craig Morris, lead ranger at the Fort Caroline National Memorial and at the Theodore Roosevelt Area. According to the article, "Morris joined the park in 1987, when he was 25 years old." Now, 56, he "has bucketfuls of good stories to tell, and a natural storyteller's way of spinning them."

Have You Seen This Man? He Is Suspected Of Stealing Firefighters' Equipment.

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (10/19, Egel) reports that "El Dorado County Sheriff's deputies are searching for a man who allegedly stole two backpacks' worth of firefighting equipment from

outside a Placerville hotel." According to the Sheriff's Office, "pictured in a white-and-red gingham shirt, vest and shaved head in security footage, the man stole two 'Mystery Ranch' backpacks out of the back of a U.S. National Park Service fire truck the night of Oct. 10."

Additional Coverage: Sperry Chalet Stabilization Nearly Finished.

Additional coverage that "Glacier National Park construction crews were wrapping up a project this week to stabilize the Sperry Chalet for the winter" was provided by the [Daily Inter Lake \(MT\)](#) (10/19, Peterson).

Congress Must Fund Glacier National Park Repairs Now.

In an op-ed for the [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (10/19, Cuffe), Rep. Mike Cuffe calls on Congress to "dedicate funding to our national parks to fix years of neglect and wildfire devastation." Cuffe notes that "our National Park System needs \$11.3 billion for deferred infrastructure repairs" and argues that "postponing maintenance can be more expensive in the long run." Cuffe urges Congress to pass the National Park Service Legacy Act, which "offers a practical solution to reduce infrastructure backlog at national parks."

Office Of Insular Affairs

Interior Hosts FAS Economic Forum.

[Marianas Variety](#) (10/20) reports that Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Doug Domenech "on Wednesday hosted several presentations focused on economic performance, policies, and possibilities for the Freely Associated States of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau." Domenech said, "Today's presentations are meant to inform and encourage policy discussions for the U.S. government and the governments of the FSM, the RMI, and Palau. We are committed to the partnerships we have under the Compacts of Free Association and to working collaboratively towards enhanced social and economic development for the people now and into the future."

Curfew Hours Changed, St. Croix Schools To Reopen.

The [Virgin Islands Daily News](#) (10/19, O'CONNOR) reports that Gov. Kenneth Mapp "extended curfew hours Wednesday back to where they were about a week ago during a radio address from Government House on St. Croix." According to the article, "residents of St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John and Water Island now have a window of between 5 a.m. and 8 p.m. each day — 15 hours — to conduct business outside of their houses."

Guam Business, Political Leaders Push For Lifting Of Jones Act.

[Marianas Variety](#) (10/17, Losinio) reports that "business and political leaders on island are saying that now may be the best time for Guam to push for exemption from the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, or the Jones Act, after President Trump suspended the Jones Act for Puerto Rico to facilitate hurricane aid shipments bound for the storm-battered commonwealth." Bobby Shringi, chairman of the board for the Guam Chamber of Commerce, "said the recent shipping issues with Puerto Rico and the lifting of the Jones Act open the door for Guam to pursue exemptions for the marine law, which was enacted nearly a century ago." He said, "However, it's more than the adverse impacts during times of disasters, as our residents pay dearly at the registers because of the Jones Act on a daily basis. With the recent decision of Delta Airlines to end services on Guam, what is truly needed are changes towards cabotage laws in general."

Military Seeks To Dispel 'Misconceptions'.

[Marianas Variety](#) (10/20, O'Connor) reports that "military officials on Guam are continuing their efforts to dispel what they called 'misconceptions' about the plan to build facilities for almost 5,000 Marines who are being moved to the island from Okinawa." At a Mayors' Council of Guam special monthly meeting Wednesday, Col. Brent Bien, head of the Marine Corps on island, said, "There's a few misconceptions and three primary ones. One you may be hearing is that the military is bad for the environment. The other is we're closing down Ritidian, and that our plans look to potentially destroy the cultural sites in that area." Bien contends the arguments by activist groups are "the main 'misconceptions' about the buildup."

Illegal Withdrawals Made From Marshall Island's US-based Trust Fund.

[Public Finance International](#) (10/19, Rensch) reports that “almost a million dollars have been illegally removed from the Marshall Islands government’s US-based trust fund, officials have reportedly said.” The article says that “a series of 12 unauthorised withdrawals from the fund at Boston’s State Street Bank were sent – \$982,265 to bank accounts in Ireland and Malaysia in June and July, local media has reported.” According to newspaper Marianas Variety, “the withdrawals of \$273,883 to Ireland were recovered but the \$708,382 to accounts in Malaysia is yet to be returned.”

Forum Focuses On Firefighters’ Health.

The [Guam Daily Post](#) (10/18, Losinio) reports that “around 50 representatives gathered for the 6th Annual Western Pacific Islands Association of Fire Chiefs (WPIAFC) Training Forum at the Lotte Hotel.” According to Tom Jenkins, president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, “firefighters are at risk of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and suicide as part of their job.”

30 Coconut Trees On Rota Flagged For Rhino Beetle Infestation.

The [Saipan \(MNP\) Tribune](#) (10/19) reports that “the Department of Lands and Natural Resources has identified 30 coconut trees in the Twerksberry area on Rota as habitats of the invasive coconut rhinoceros beetles.” According to the article, “to contain the insect and prevent infestation of other coconut trees, DLNR will be closing off the Twerksberry area starting at 6:30pm everyday.”

Making The Decision To Migrate In The Marshall Islands.

In a piece for [NewSecurityBeat](#) (10/18, De Souza), Mickael De Souza, an undergraduate student at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, writes that “the specter of climate change” threatens Republic of the Marshall Islands, “raising sea levels, salinizing soils, and sapping freshwater resources.” De Souza “assisted with a study spearheaded by Maxine Burkett, a Wilson Center global fellow and a professor at the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai’i, that sought to find out how the impacts of climate change have affected decisions within the Marshallese community that migrated to Hawai’i.” The study “found that to date, Marshallese do not perceive climate change as playing a large role in the decision to migrate.”

US Geological Survey

‘Great ShakeOut,’ World’s Largest Earthquake Drill, Helps Millions Prepare For Disaster.

[NBC News](#) (10/19, Chuck) reports that “millions of people dropped to the ground and crouched under their desks Thursday as part of the world’s largest earthquake drill.” The “Great ShakeOut” was held “at 10:19 a.m. local time around the world.” According to the article, “about 21 million people practiced what to do if a quake strikes, with more than 10.2 million of them in California — which experts say is likely to experience a massive quake in the next several decades.” David Schwartz, a geologist with the United States Geological Survey, said, “The Bay Area sits right in the boundary zone between the Pacific plate and the North American plate. They’re sliding past each other at about 40 millimeters a year, a little less than 2 inches. Doesn’t sound like a lot, but over the years, that builds up to a lot of stress and motion.”

Top National News

Kelly Offers Impassioned Defense Of Trump’s Phone Call To Soldier’s Widow.

White House Chief of Staff Kelly’s unexpected appearance at the daily White House briefing, where he defended President Trump’s phone call to the widow of Sgt. La David Johnson, gets heavy and mostly laudatory coverage. Kelly is described as speaking in very personal terms about what it is like to be informed that one’s child has been killed in action, and reports offer extended segments from his remarks with little commentary. This is undercut somewhat by the initial response to President Trump’s late-night [tweet](#) about Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-FL), who had publicly criticized Trump’s comments on the call. Several journalists tweeted in response that Trump’s tweet undid some of what Kelly had achieved.

In opening [ABC World News Tonight](#) (10/19, lead story, 5:20), David Muir called Kelly’s appearance a “deeply personal moment,” while on the [CBS Evening News](#) (10/19, lead story,

4:45), Anthony Mason opened by calling it “an extraordinary scene at the White House.” Muir reported that Kelly defended Trump’s phone call, “and in doing so, Gen. Kelly talking about the loss of his own son” in Afghanistan, and then “blasted the congresswoman who said the family was offended by the President’s call.” On CBS, Mason reported that “Kelly said he’d recommended early on that the President not call families of the fallen, but Mr. Trump told him [that] he wanted to call the families of the four soldiers killed two weeks ago in Niger.” Kelly: “And he said to me, ‘What do I say?’ I said to him, ‘Sir, there’s nothing you can do to lighten the burden on these families. But let me tell you what I tell them. He was doing exactly what he wanted to do when he was killed. He knew what he was getting into by joining that one percent. He knew what the possibilities were, because we’re at war.’”

In opening [NBC Nightly News](#) (10/19, lead story, 3:50), Lester Holt called it an “extraordinary moment” when Kelly, “a Gold Star father, broke his public silence over the deaths of four American soldiers in Niger in deeply personal terms.” NBC’s Peter Alexander reported that Kelly “fiercely denounc[ed] criticism” by Wilson. Kelly: “I was stunned when I came to work yesterday morning, and brokenhearted. It stuns me that a member of Congress would have listened in on the conversation. Absolutely stuns me.”

The [AP](#) (10/19, Lemire, Lucey) says that Kelly “delivered an extraordinary denunciation” of Wilson “in an unexpected and emotional appearance in the White House briefing room.” [USA Today](#) (10/19, Przybyla) reports that Kelly said the comments Trump made to Myeshia Johnson “were similar to those spoken to him after his son was killed in Afghanistan. ... Kelly said that the conversation in the aftermath of a military death is one of the only aspects of American life that has not been politicized.” The [Washington Times](#) (10/19, Miller) quotes Kelly saying, “Let’s try to somehow keep that sacred. But it eroded a great deal yesterday by the selfish behavior of a member of Congress.”

The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (10/19, Rutz) reports that Wilson responded by saying that Kelly “‘will say anything’ and is trying to keep his job.” The [Miami Herald](#) (10/19, Daugherty) reports that Wilson also responded to Kelly’s criticism that she bragged about getting the funding for an FBI building at its dedication; the building was being named for two slain agents. Wilson said, “He shouldn’t be able to just say that, that is terrible. This has become totally personal.”

The President weighed in on Twitter at 10:53 p.m., [tweeting](#), “The Fake News is going crazy with wacky Congresswoman Wilson (D), who was SECRETLY on a very personal call, and gave a total lie on content!” Blake Hounshell of Politico [tweeted](#) in response, “So I had thought that Kelly had put a coda on this story today, but I guess Trump wants it to continue.” CNN’s Jim Acosta similarly [tweeted](#), “Appears POTUS wants to have last word on this... not Kelly.” NBC News’ Benjy Sarlin [tweeted](#), “Kelly put himself in a deeply uncomfortable place to lend some small dignity to this story and this is how he’s repaid within hours.”

In other coverage of Kelly’s remarks, the [New York Times](#) (10/19, Shear) reports that Kelly “delivered an emotional, personal defense of President Trump’s call” to Myeshia Johnson “after Mr. Trump and the White House were consumed by criticism after the president’s actions this week.” Kelly defended Trump “by offering a detailed, even excruciating description of what happens to those killed in combat,” and “testified to the deep pain that parents feel when they get an early-morning knock on the door from an official there to tell them that their son or daughter has been killed in action.”

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (10/19, Bennett) also says Kelly “gave an emotional defense of Trump’s calls,” saying that Trump “was echoing words that Kelly had suggested.” The [New York Post](#) (10/19, Fredericks) says Kelly “gave a powerful defense of President Trump’s handling” of the call, while [McClatchy](#) (10/19, Daugherty, Kumar) calls it “a somber but passionate defense.” Kelly “recalled how difficult it is for presidents to speak with the families of veterans killed in action” and “said that Trump made a ‘brave’ decision to call the four families” of soldiers killed in the Niger ambush. [Breitbart](#) (10/19, Spiering) says that Kelly “delivered a stirring speech.”

The [CBS Evening News](#) (10/19, story 2, 3:25, Mason) aired a long clip of Kelly’s remarks that ran about three minutes. The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Gearan, Rucker, Wagner) reports that Kelly spoke for about 18 minutes, “answering a few questions before departing, and ignoring others that were shouted at him as he left.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19) says in an editorial that Kelly elevated the discussion and brought the focus back to the bravery of the soldiers, where it should be.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Kellman, Burns) writes in an analysis, “The public controversy this week clearly was painful for Kelly, whose son had been awarded the Purple Heart.” Trump’s “willingness to raise the tragedy set many in the military community seething.” Obama Administration Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel told the AP, “To use Gen. Kelly and his family in this disgusting political way is sickening and beneath every shred of decency of presidential

leadership." In an interview with [USA Today](#) (10/19, Brook), Hagel said, "I'm offended by the way he's handled it. You just don't use the families of the fallen to score political points."

Ex-Defense Secretary, CIA Director, and White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta said on [CNN's Situation Room](#) (10/19), "I have a lot of respect for John Kelly" and "I understand where John was coming from." However, "I think he was trying to do damage repair here on this whole issue." Panetta later said on [CNN's Anderson Cooper 360](#) (10/19), "I would wish that the focus would be on those men and women who are willing to serve and put their lives on the line and on the families that have lost loved ones, that's where the focus ought to be."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (10/19, Westwood) reports, "Trump has denied saying anything insensitive." But in his [Washington Post](#) (10/19) column, Eugene Robinson writes, "Trump is a weak, narcissistic man in a job that requires strength and empathy. I'm not sure that empathy is a concept he even understands. He acts as if he believes that feeling someone else's pain is strictly for losers, not winners." The [AP](#) (10/19, Woodward, Davies) reports that it "tried to reach the families of all 43 people who have died in military service since Trump became president and made contact with about 20 families. More than half said they had not heard from Trump."

[Bloomberg News](#) (10/19, Talev, Sink), [Politico](#) (10/19, McCaskill), [The Hill](#) (10/19, Fabian), the [Daily Caller](#) (10/19, Pfeiffer), and the [Washington Free Beacon](#) (10/19, Beck) also have brief reports consisting mainly of Kelly's comments.

Senate Passes Budget Blueprint With Key Provision For Tax Reform.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Kaplan) reports that, in "a significant step toward rewriting the tax code," the Senate passed a budget blueprint that prevents Democrats from filibustering a \$1.5 trillion tax cut. The measure also allows drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska "can pass with only Republican votes." The blueprint passed 51-49, with Sen. Rand Paul, complaining about excessive spending, the only Republican voting against it. The budget debate offered Republicans the opportunity "to showcase their main goal in the coming months:" a tax overhaul. Meanwhile, Democrats "lamented the approach that Republicans are taking on taxes, which mirrors the strategy that they employed in their failed effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Viebeck) reports that "by agreeing to the massive tax cut, Senate Republicans have officially moved the party far away from its promised goal of ensuring that the tax plan would not add to the deficit," as, in search of "a political win after months of frustration on Capitol Hill" GOP "abandoned longstanding party orthodoxy of deficit reduction." Before the budget blueprint was approved, the Senate saw about six hours of amendment votes "in which Democrats sought to call attention to controversial aspects of the GOP tax plan." Democratic plans focuses on highlighting "four key tax-reform topics intended to make Republicans cast politically awkward votes: tax cuts for the wealthy, tax increases for the middle class, reductions to Medicare and Medicaid spending, and increases to the budget deficit."

In an analysis piece, the [New York Times](#) (10/19, Kaplan) reports that "perhaps all that really matters" is the language that would allow passing a tax overhaul with only Republican votes; everything else in the bill "even Republicans admit, is filler." The Times adds, "Senators are not even pretending that plotting out the government's finances is the task at hand." Similarly, the [Washington Times](#) (10/19, Sherfinski) reports, "Republicans said [the budget resolution's] numbers were probably irrelevant." Meanwhile, top GOP leaders "expressed doubt" there is time to pass a tax overhaul this year. Sen. Roy Blunt, the vice chairman of the Senate GOP conference, even said, in the Times' words, that "they'll be able to take a 'second look' at reforming the tax code in 2019 or 2020."

The [AP](#) (10/19, Taylor) reports, "Republicans have said failure on taxes would be politically devastating in next year's midterm elections, when control of the House and Senate are at stake."

Also covering this story are the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Andrews, Peterson, Rubin), the [Los Angeles Times](#) (10/19, Mascaro), and [The Hill](#) (10/19, Carney, Elis).

Ryan, McConnell Said To Have Reached Bicameral Budget Deal. [Politico](#) (10/19, Bade, Everett, Ferris) reports multiple sources in both chambers said that House Speaker Ryan and Senate Majority Leader McConnell have reached "a bicameral budget deal allowing Congress to swiftly move to tax reform." GOP leaders, House Budget Chairman Diane Black, and Senate Budget Chairman Mike Enzi "crafted a Senate amendment full of House-requested tweaks" that was approved by the Senate.

Barrasso: Trump To Meet With GOP Senators. The [Washington Times](#) (10/19, Dinan) reports Sen. John Barrasso, head of the Senate Republican Policy Committee, announced that President

Trump will meet with Republican senators next week, in the Times' words, to "rally them ahead of a months-long push to approve a massive tax reform deal." The event will also allow Trump "to meet with many of his chief Capitol Hill critics."

GOP Hoping Aggressive Timeline Will Prevent Loss Of Support For Tax Plan. The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Tankersley) reports GOP "party leaders are preparing to move ahead on a timeline" to pass tax reform "even more aggressive than their unsuccessful attempts to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act," despite few having seen the bill and "key details" remaining unsettled. The GOP seeks to move with "striking – and strategic" – speed in the hopes that their narrow Senate majority will be kept together by the "breakneck pace" amid the anticipated "deluge of lobbying and Democratic criticism." Part of the issue is that campaign donors, business groups, and the White House are pressuring congressional Republicans "to deliver a major legislative victory."

Van Hollen: Democrats Willing To Work On Tax Reform, Not Helping The Rich. Sen. Chris Van Hollen said on [MSNBC's Morning Joe](#) (10/19), "The President is running around the country telling people that this is going to reduce the tax burden on the middle class. Uh-uh, that's not the case." Van Hollen added that the GOP plan "will increase taxes on tens of millions of folks in the middle, in order to finance tax breaks for the folks at the very, very top, the top one percent." He also said, "So we're all in, if we're talking about simplifying the tax code and helping folks in the middle. We're not in, if we're talking about increasing taxes on folks in the middle to finance tax breaks for millionaires."

Pompeo: North Korea Months Away From Perfecting Nuclear Capabilities.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Riechmann) reports CIA Director Pompeo warned Thursday that North Korea is "months away from perfecting its nuclear weapons capabilities." Addressing a national security forum in Washington, Pompeo said, "They are close enough now in their capabilities that from a US policy perspective we ought to behave as if we are on the cusp of them achieving" their objective of being able to strike the US. However, he stressed that "there's a difference between having the ability to fire a single nuclear missile and the capability of producing large amounts of fissile material and developing an arsenal of such weapons." Speaking at the same event, National Security Adviser McMaster said, "We are in a race to resolve this short of military action. We are not out of time, but we are running out of time." [CNN's Situation Room](#) (10/19) said McMaster made a "veiled threat" when he said President Trump is "not going to accept this regime threatening the United States with a nuclear weapon."

North Korea Threatens "Unimaginable Nuclear Strike" On The US. Reporting from inside North Korea, [NBC Nightly News](#) (10/19, story 5, 2:15, Holt) Kier Simmons said the North is "not backing down from the international condemnation of their nuclear program." Simmons was able to speak with North Korea's vice foreign minister, Pak Myong Guk, who told him "negotiation is only possible if US nuclear weapons are also on the table. A nonstarter in Washington." Meanwhile, when Simmons asked a North Korean lieutenant colonel about President Trump, the military official said, "He is mentally ill," and added, "If there is a war, we will win." The remarks come as a "furious" North Korea is "warning that it will unleash an 'unimaginable nuclear strike on the US'" after American military forces, including an aircraft carrier, conducted joint drills with South Korea this week.

Scarborough: Trump Should Learn From JFK How To Handle A Nuclear Crisis. Joe Scarborough writes in the [Washington Post](#) (10/19) that 55 years ago today, President John F. Kennedy was navigating the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the US now faces another nuclear showdown, this time with North Korea. In an address to the nation at the height of the crisis, Kennedy said, "Our goal is not the victory of might, but the vindication of right. Not peace at the expense of freedom but both peace and freedom. ... God willing, that goal will be achieved." Scarborough writes, "That is the kind of White House address US presidents once gave. A speech of hope, not hyperbole. A speech that sought peace instead of flirting with war. A speech seeking solutions instead of stirring up the anger of an embittered political base."

Jobless Claims At Lowest Level In 44 Years.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Wiseman) reports "the number of Americans collecting unemployment benefits fell last week to the lowest level since Richard Nixon was president." The Labor Department said yesterday that "claims for jobless aid dropped by 22,000 to 222,000, fewest since March 1973. The less volatile four-week average slid by 9,500 to 248,250, lowest since late August." In a story that led the Drudge Report last night, [Bloomberg News](#) (10/19) also notes "filings for unemployment benefits plunged last week to the lowest level since 1973."

EPA Chief Tells Oil, Gas Leaders That Agency Not Like Previous Administration.

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (10/19, Stuckey) reports that EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt spoke at the Texas Oil and Gas Association's annual Lone Star Energy Forum yesterday, where he "gave a succinct message to oil and gas industry leaders: The Trump administration's agency will be nothing like the last." He said that the Trump administration is "focused on results and that's been the primary focus of my first months at the EPA," and referred specifically to the EPA's fast pace in approving waste removal from the San Jacinto Waste Pits after years of inaction.

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

"The Self-Dealing Presidency Of Donald Trump." The [New York Times](#) (10/19) editorializes about the lawsuit alleging that President Trump has violated the emoluments clauses of the Constitution, one prohibiting officials from accepting "any present, emoluments, office, or title, of any kind whatever" from foreign governments without congressional approval, and another that "bars presidents from getting payments from federal or state governments other than their salaries." The Times argues that "Presidents have been generally transparent about their financial holdings, placing assets in blind trusts and releasing their tax returns," but President Trump, "whose global empire of hotels, real estate, golf courses and other businesses is awash in foreign money," has "refused to take those steps." The Times contends that "even if the case is thrown," Trump "is still a walking emoluments-clause violation," and "he still refuses to release his tax returns and other financial records, preventing the public from seeing the full extent of his business entanglements, debts and interests."

"A Chance To Defuse The Catalonia Crisis." A [New York Times](#) (10/19) editorial says the crisis "started spiraling out of control on Thursday," but stresses that "the door is not yet closed. Mr. Rajoy has not said exactly what he intends to do at the emergency cabinet meeting he called for Saturday." Puigdemont's government also "has not unequivocally declared independence. Both sides can still offer concessions, or at least conciliatory signals, that could move them back from the brink."

Washington Post.

"Strike Three." The [Washington Post](#) (10/19) editorializes that "once again, the courts have blocked President Trump's travel ban from going into effect." On Tuesday, a federal judge in Hawaii "stopped the ban from taking effect," and a federal judge in Maryland "followed suit on Wednesday, blocking enforcement of the ban as applied to travelers with 'bona fide' ties to the United States." The Post notes that the Supreme Court "just dismissed a suit against the second version of the travel ban last week, and will likely do so with another challenge at the end of October when the existing ban on refugee admissions expires." The Post adds that "both judges noted" that "the administration has failed to provide any evidence that nationality has anything to do with the security threat an individual poses." According to the Post, the ban "alienates many while achieving nothing," and it concludes that "the wisest move for the administration would be to let the ban fade away."

"Hailing A Subsidy For Mass Transit." In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (10/19) reports that the Chicago City Council's new proposed fee on ride-hailing companies, such as Uber, would provide needed revenue to the city's aging transit infrastructure and offers a concept that "makes sense and merits consideration in other cities, including Washington." The Post argues that because ride-hailing service "are used disproportionately by wealthier passengers," such a fee would support a transit system serves everyone, including poorer passengers.

"A Superpower For Liberty." In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (10/19) praises George Soros for his three decades of support for civil society organizations and for his \$18 billion in contributions over recent years – but disclosed only this week – to his Open Society Foundations. The Post adds that Soros' work is "urgent now as President Trump turns his back on decades of U.S. support for democracy and human rights," and concludes that for all Soros' contributions to democracy, "it would be doubly good if the government of the United States were walking in tandem with him, and it is a tragedy that it is not."

Wall Street Journal.

"A Fed For A Growth Economy." In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19) urges Trump to select a Fed chairman who supports faster economic growth, and casts Powell as too similar to

Janet Yellen. The Journal, which blames Yellen and Obama-era economic policies for the slow GDP growth over the last decade, goes on to defend the potential nominations of Kevin Warsh and John Taylor.

“Another Republican Retirement.” In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Board) calls Tiberi’s decision a bad sign for GOP hopes of maintaining its House majority in next year’s elections, and argues that if Republicans don’t pass tax reform, it will likely further hurt the party in 2018.

“John Kelly’s Heroes.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19) says in an editorial that Kelly elevated the discussion and brought the focus back to the bravery of the soldiers, where it should be.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Tillerson Balances Trump’s Goals And His Own](#)

[Beneath The Market Rally: A Lot Less Trading](#)

[WeWork: A \\$20 Billion Startup Fueled By Silicon Valley Pixie Dust](#)

[Walmart Courts Lord & Taylor For Online Challenge To Amazon](#)

New York Times:

[Kelly Delivers Fervent Defense Of Trump Call To Soldier’s Widow](#)

[Without Saying “Trump,” Bush And Obama Deliver Implicit Rebukes](#)

[Ebola’s Legacy: Children With Cataracts](#)

[Senators Demand Online Ad Disclosures As Tech Lobby Mobilizes](#)

[Puerto Ricans Ask: When Will The Lights Come Back On?](#)

[Bomb School Wasn’t For Lulu, But The CIA Wishes Her The Best](#)

Washington Post:

[Bush Denounces “Bigotry,” “Fabrication”](#)

[Gillespie’s Former Clients May Be Ethics Challenge](#)

[In Amazon’s Boomtown, Lessons For The Next One](#)

[For Rohingya, Suu Kyi A “Bright Light” No More](#)

[Kelly Defends Call To Widow](#)

Financial Times:

[Theresa May Asks EU Not To Back Her Into Corner On Brexit](#)

[Lyft Wins Alphabet Backing In \\$1bn Funding Round](#)

[Kurds Fearful And Angry After Iraqi Forces Take Kirkuk](#)

[FBI Probes US Links To South Africa’s Gupta](#)

Washington Times:

[Muslim-Run Messaging Center Wages Cyberwar On Islamic State](#)

[“Keep That Sacred”: Disgusted Kelly Berates Congresswoman, Defends Trump In Green Beret’s Death](#)

[Senate Passes \\$4 Trillion Budget In Crucial Step For Trump’s Tax Overhaul](#)

[Argentine Elections A Bellwether On Left’s Hopes For A Comeback](#)

[Gillespie Blames Rise Of MS-13 In Virginia On Democratic Opponent](#)

[Weinstein Scandal Exposes Depth Of Abuse, Harassment In Hollywood](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night’s Network News:

ABC: White House-Fallen Soldiers Call; Niger US Casualty Investigation; Former Presidents Public Appearances; Florida-White Nationalist Speaker Protest; Las Vegas Shooting Investigation; Puerto Rico Hurricane Recovery; Flight-Close Call; Flight-Emergency Landing; Weinstein Sexual Harassment Scandal; Amazon-New HQ City Selection; Lunch Time Musician.

CBS: White House-Fallen Soldiers Call; Kelly-Fallen Soldiers Call; Former Presidents Public Appearances; Fallen Soldiers Call-Expert Opinion; Niger US Casualty Investigation; Walking-Healthy Habit; Weinstein Sexual Harassment Scandal; School Name-Confederacy.

NBC: White House-Fallen Soldiers Call; Niger US Casualty Investigation; Former Presidents Public Appearances; Florida-White Nationalist Speaker Protest; North Korea Threats; Puerto Rico

Hurricane Recovery; Maryland Shooter Arrested; Seasonal Forecast; Retail-Holiday Shopping; Food Truck Explosion; Kids-Mobile Device; NFL News; California Wildfires-Mailman.

Network TV At A Glance:

White House-Fallen Soldiers Call – 19 minutes, 25 seconds

Niger US Casualty Investigation – 6 minutes, 45 seconds

Former Presidents Public Appearances – 6 minutes, 30 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Florida-White Nationalist Speaker Protest; Former Presidents Public Appearances; White House-Fallen Soldiers Call; Tax Reform-Congress.

CBS: Tax Reform-Congress; Niger US Casualty Investigation; White House-Fallen Soldiers Call; California Wildfires; Florida-White Nationalist Speaker Protest.

FOX: Tax Reform-Congress; White House-Fallen Soldiers Call; Puerto Rico Hurricane Recovery.

NPR: Bipartisan Healthcare Plan; Honest Media Act; Tax Reform-Congress; White House-Fallen Soldiers Call.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Meets with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — No public events scheduled.

US Senate: No public schedule announced.

US House: 2:30 PM House Small Business Committee field hearing on capital access – Field hearing on 'Small Business Capital Access: Supporting Community and Economic Development', with testimony from Opportunity Finance Network Vice President of Public Policy Dafina Williams; Entrepreneur Works President Leslie Benoliel; EMSCO Scientific Enterprises CEO Lin Thomas; and Bright Yellow Creamery owner Steve Dorcelien Location: The Enterprise Center, 4548 Market St, Philadelphia, PA Philadelphia <http://smallbusiness.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/SmallBizGOP>
On recess until 23 October.

Other: Meridian Global Leadership Summit – Meridian Global Leadership Summit, on the 'importance of international engagement and how the United States can more effectively utilize its global leadership position to benefit the entire nation'. Speakers include Republican Rep. Ed Royce, Democratic Rep. Eliot Engel, Under Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, and Coca-Cola Company President James Quincey Location: Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC www.meridian.org <https://twitter.com/MeridianIntl>

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Jimmy Kimmel: "Everyone be careful. We got snakes and fire and everything. ... That was the Coney Island Circus sideshow, or members of Donald Trump's cabinet, I'm not sure."

Trevor Noah: "I don't know if you know, but there's a guy named Donald Trump who is the President. From day one of his presidency, he's possessed an ability to conjure scandal out of thin air. ... How do you start so clear and veer off-track? He was handed the baton, and instead of staying in his lane, he walks off the track, drives a car down the cliff, gets out and dusts himself off and says, 'Why didn't Obama drive?'"

Trevor Noah: [Referring to the controversy with President Trump's call to the fallen soldier in Niger] "Do you think a phone is going to magically transform [President Trump] into an eloquent man? Like Trump will be talking about all these losers and haters, bing, bing, bong, bigly! 'Hold on, I've got to make a call. Greetings and salutations! My soul is awash in a great flood of sorrow as I reflect upon your circumstance. Fare thee well. Right, where was I? Little Rocket Man!' It's not going to happen."

Trevor Noah: "Donald Trump sucks at making these calls, which is unfortunate, because I don't know who at the White House can make these calls, right? Jared Kushner can't do it because he's on the line, one fixing the Middle East. You don't want Sarah Huckabee Sanders calling because she'll tell you your son didn't die. Then 30 other people can't do it because they've all been fired."

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